

Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the paragraph beginning on line 21 of page 4 as follows:

Referring to FIGS. 3 and 4, upper and lower lips 24,26 of board 14 present opposite inwardly facing surfaces ~~34,36~~ 40,42 which define at least a portion of groove 22. As shown in FIG.3, when protrusion 34 is received in groove 22, protrusion 34 is received between and contacts both inwardly facing surfaces ~~34,36~~ 40,42. This contact between protrusion 34 and surfaces ~~34,36~~ 40,42 prevents upward or downward movement of board 14 relative to fastener 20. It is preferred for the distance between surface ~~34~~ 40 and surface ~~36~~ 42 (i.e., the width of groove 22) to be in the range of from about 0.05 to about 0.5 inches, more preferably from about 0.1 to about 0.3 inches, and most preferably from 0.15 to 0.25 inches. Referring again to FIG. 4, groove 22 also includes an inner-most surface ~~38~~ 44 which represents the deepest portion of groove 22. It is preferred for upper lip 24 to extend further from inner-most surface ~~38~~ 44 than lower lip 26. More preferably, upper lip 24 extends at least about ten percent further from inner-most surface ~~38~~ 44 than lower lip 26, still more preferably at least about twenty percent further, and most preferably at least thirty percent further. As shown in FIG. 4, this configuration allows broad head 28 of fastener 20 to be received between boards 14 while maintaining a minimal gap 18 between the upper lips 24 of boards 14, thereby substantially hiding fastener 20 under upper lips 24. Further, this configuration allows for the use of a fastener 20 having a flared base 32, which permits the fastener to stand up on the joist 12 without additional external support.